DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 080 508 SP 006 801

TITLE	IMPACTE: Indian-Metis Project for Careers Through Teacher Education.
INSTITUTION	Manitoba Dept. of Education, Winnipeg.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Ottawa (Ontario).
NOTE	9p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*American Indians; *Ethnic Groups; Minority Groups; Minority Group Teachers; *Preservice Education; *Teacher Certification; *Teacher Education Curriculum

ABSTRACT

The primary goal of the Indian-Metis Project for Careers through Teacher Education (IMPACTE) is to increase the number of certified teachers of native origin in Manitoba. The desire to obtain a teaching certificate and a mature student's university admission are the only requirements; high school graduation is not required. IMPACTE students are required to complete the same number of credit hours with the same grade proint average as other candidates; however, a much greater emphasis is placed on classroom experience. It is the hope of this project that native teachers will give young native Indians in Manitoba a positive image of themselves as a minority group. (JB)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRO
DUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM
THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGIN
ATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRE
SENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 080508

IMPACTE

The primary goal of the Indian-Metis Project for Careers through Teacher Education (IMPACTE) is to increase the number of certified teachers of native origin in Manitoba.

Funded by the Planning and Research branch of the provincial Department of Colleges and University Affairs and the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, IMPACTE is operated within the faculty of education at Brandon University.

The two year old project has an enrollment of 56 students. Of these, eight are expected to be recommended for teacher certification this year.

The desire to obtain a teaching certificate and a mature students' university admission are the only requirements for entrance into the IMPACTE program. Highschool graduation is not a requirement.

IMPACTE students are required to complete the same number of credit hours with the same grade point average as other B.T. candidates. However a much greater emphasis is placed on class-room experience with the students spending approximately 50 percent of their time in the classroom.

"The additional classroom experience provides a linkage between training and performance," says IMPACTE Director, Dr. Pandy Halamandaris.

The IMPACTE program includes both "on-campus" and "off-campus" students. The on-campus students take classes at the university campus and students teach in the Brandon school division. The on-campus program involves only Treaty Indians who receive training allowances from the federal Department of Inian Affairs.

SP 006 801

Off-campus IMPACTE, which includes both treaty and non-treaty students operates from three centres, The Pas, Sandy Bay - Amaranth and Birtle. Non-treaty students receive training allowances based on Canada Manpower rates through Colleges and University Affairs. The off-campus students take their courses with travelling professors. In addition they spend three or four weeks each term at Brandon University.

Counselling services are available to the students from Eileen Brownridge and Don Robertson, both of whom travel to the off-campus centres. In addition, mentors, usually the school principal or vice-principal have been appointed from among the teaching staff at the co-operating schools. The mentor provides counselling and study skills assistance to the IMPACTE students. On-campus students have access to study skills specialists at the university.

Beyond the immediate goal of increasing the number of elementary school teachers of native origin the project has had a considerable influence at both the university and school levels of the education system in Manitoba. To meet the special needs and interests of the IMPACTE students, Brandon University has added a variety of new courses to its general calendar, particularly in the area of native studies. The university has introduced another innovation - travelling professors who instruct off-campus IMPACTE students.

Although the total effects of IMPACTE on the school system will not be known until IMPACTE graduates have been teaching for several years, supervising teachers and principals at some of the co-operating schools say the IMPACTE student-teachers have already made significant contributions. These contributions include a greater awareness among teaching staff of issues in cross-cultural education. The presence of a native person in a teaching role has also contributed to a more positive self-image among native school children, they state.

The IMPACTE Students

"It's a native orientated program which helps us develop a positive identity. Native teachers can provide this, in turn, to native children," says Ken Courchene an IMPACTE student who will receive his teaching certificate in May 1973.

"The IMPACTE student won't be just another teacher," he said. "We have a special potential to use."

Sidney Muskego who is also in his certification year, believes IMPACTE teachers will bring about a number of changes in curriculum and school structure particularly in schools in Northern Manitoba, where the student population is predominantly, if not exclusively, native. One of the examples Sidney uses to show the potential is physical education. "We can establish physical education programs using native games. Students can learn to build their own snow shoes in shops."

Sidney also sees a need for more native history, culture and language courses in the schools. He would like to see the structure of northern schools changed to account for the differences between white culture and native culture. "Free school principles have particular relevance to native students. For example, parent participation. An unstructured approach would be more likely to encourage involvement among native parents."

More immediately IMPACTE students see an immediate reaction simply from having a native teacher in the classroom. "Even when the native child speaks perfect English, they are likely to be more responsive to a native teacher," says Roberta Beardy, a student in her certification year.

Roberta believes native teachers for native students is particularly important in the elementary grades.

Her supervising teacher at Ospasquia school in The Pas agrees. "This is a kindergarten class. Often the Indian children never say a word all year. But there has been a remarkable difference since Roberta has been here. She talks to them in Cree and also in English. Soon they are speaking up, both in Cree and in English," says Mr. Taylor.

The Principal at Fleming school in Brandon, Colin Mailer, agrees. "Because the native teachers can offer their background and their language to the native student, the child can accept them more readily than they do a white teacher. Our experience has been that the IMPACTE student-teachers have helped to bridge the gap between the white teacher and the native student."

Mrs. Taylor also agrees with Sidney. "Indian people need their own teachers who can build a relevant curriculum."

Other consequences of the IMPACTE program which both teachers at the co-operating schools and the IMPACTE students see are increased native parent participation in the school and a changing attitude to education among native children. Stella Young, who is doing her student-teaching at Ospasquia school points out, "I've had native students tell me they are going to be teachers also, just like me."

Ken Courchene's supervising teacher, at the elementary school in Alexander, Jim Jankiewicz says the alienation of the native student from the school becomes particularly significant "around about grades five and six."

"It's at this age they really become aware of being a minority group and of discrimination. The way to change this situation is to ensure they have positive images to relate to and one of the best ways of doing this is to have native people in the teaching profession."

Principal of Alexander school, Jack Warkentin, predicts that one of the longer term accomplishments of IMPACTE will be "to bridge the gap between white middle class schools and native communities."

The IMPACTE students are not exclusively committed to teaching native children. Sheila Beardy, a first year IMPACTE student states a preference for teaching "a mixed class".

"I'll be able to offer white children the Indian point of view, pass on some of the values of native culture," she says.

The University

One of the major advantages of the IMPACTE program is the extended time spent in the classroom. "IMPACTE is a superior teacher training model because of this and we are beginning to use this approach to the regular education program," says University president, Dr. Lloyd Dulmage.

The concept of varying the time required to complete a course and holding achievement constant, rather than allowing achievement to vary (pass/fail) has also influenced the regular university program says Dr. Dulmage. "Brandon University allows more incompletes than most universities for the student who hasn't covered the work in the conventional time and also for the student who wants to do more in a particular course."

"In most universities time is held constant and achievement is allowed to vary. For example students write exams in April. Their achievement can vary from A to F. In IMPACTE we allow students to take whatever amount of time they require to perform satisfactorily," explains Dr. Halamandaris.

Dr. Dulmage says that courses in native languages, culture and history which have been added to the university calendar since the inception of IMPACTE "would have come anyway. However, since the native student enrollment at Brandon University is slightly over 10 percent we find qualified teachers are keener to come here than to universities which have native studies programs, but no native students."

Cree and Saulteaux-speaking IMPACTE students are acting as resource people for the language courses.

Dr. Dulmage credits the IMPACTE program with encouraging the high enrollment of native students at the university. "Particularly the off-campus program has helped us form a bond of trust with the communities. This wouldn't have happened if we'd simply whisked the students away to the campus."

The Program

For Sidney Muskego, president of the IMPACTE students' association, the key word to describe the program is "flexibility."

"The director, Dr. Pandy Halamandaris listens to the students. Our complaints are taken care of, our suggestions have weight."

Partly because of the students' sense of genuine participation in IMPACTE and also because of the program's uniqueness, the IMPACTE students define themselves as "a community".

"The feeling of community makes it easier to get through university," Sidney states. The IMPACTE Student Association holds meetings whenever the off-campus students are in Brandon and publishes a monthly newsletter. "This kind of mutual support among the students is essential," says Dr. Halamandaris.

Dr. Halamandaris points out that orientation for the freshmen IMPACTE students is organized and delivered by senior IMPACTE students. The four week orientation includes study skills, life skills and introduction to teaching, a course which Dr. Halamandaris calls "classroom survival."

Applications for IMPACTE are recruited through general advertising and through referrals from the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, the Manitoba Metis Federation and various government agencies. Recruiting teams made up of representatives from the faculty of education, the IMPACTE staff and senior IMPACTE students interview applicants in their home communities. Candidates must be approved by local community leaders.

For the off-campus students there are certain disadvantages, such as not being able to consult with faculty memebers at any time and not having all the resources at hand. However the advantages far out weigh the disadvantages. Particularly for some of the married women, teacher training would not have been possible if they had been required to leave their home communities and their families.

Supervising teachers see real advantages to having IMPACTE student-teachers in the classroom. Mrs. Taylor says that between herself and Roberta they are able to "give more individual attention to children, who need it - speech training, English language instruction, special support for they shy child."

Linda Lewandoski, a supervising teacher at Erikson school says the presence of the IMPACTE student in her classroom "makes me look at my own teaching methods much more closely."

The vice-principal at Erikson school, Tom Emslie, believes the IMPACTE students "has made white teachers take a closer look at relationships with native students and at the relevance of the curriculum - something some of them had only paid lip service to before."

One of the criticisms which many of the schools have of the program is inadequate preparation for their role. Marion Pesiak, a supervising teacher at Ospasquia school said supervising teachers should be provided with an orientation session prior to the arrival of the IMPACTE student.

"Particularly the teachers who are supervising first year IMPACTE students need better guidelines. When should students just be observing, when should they start working with small groups and when should they be taking over the whole class," said Colin Mailer.

A recent seminar at Brandon University for supervising teachers on the whole question of IMPACTE - student supervision was hailed as an excellent step towards better preparation of the schools. Cross-cultural workshops were also held during the last year for schools involved in IMPACTE. These workshops were aimed more generally at establishing a sympathetic environment for the IMPACTE program and at familiarizing the teachers with native culture and history.

The key role for the school principal is the selection of supervising teachers. "I look for strong teachers who are well organized, mature and who relate well to adults," said Ospasquia principal, Bob Isfeld.

"The supervising teachers must have sensitivety to native people if they are to cope with day-in, day-out things that arise," states Colin Mailer.

One of the most frequent complaints against some of the IMPACTE students was absenteeism. There was no agreement however as to why absenteeism is a problem. George Takashima, assistant superintendent for the Kelsey School Division believes the IMPACTE students must be screened more carefully.

Bob Isfeld believes IMPACTE students should be held more accountable. "Right now there are no consequences to the IMPACTE student for poor attendance."

Tom Emslie sees staff attitude as the key. "If the student has a good relationship with the supervising teacher, if he feels accepted as one of the staff, unreliability is not a problem."

Eilleen Brownridge, IMPACTE Counsellor, points out that the IMPACTE students very often have a myriad of personal difficulties, ranging from baby-sitting problems to marital difficulties, which the regular student-teacher is less likely to experience.

Tom Emslie sees all of the tensions and difficulties of IMPACTE as growing pains. "It would be a mistake to get hung up on these."

Dr. Halamandaris points out also that the problems faced by many of the IMPACTE students are not readily comprehensible to middle class white on-lookers. He also points out that the IMPACTE program is developing support services such as staff development for supervising teachers and this is being done in co-operation with the teachers to ensure their real needs are being met. More emphasis is being placed on personal counselling for off-campus students.

Tom Emslie also sees the schools changing in response to IMPACTE. "If there is racism in the schools, IMPACTE brings it right out into the open. We have to be willing to confront that."